T. L. BRYANT, former White House electrician, stands in his grove of 3 year old Autumn Olive at his Appomattox County farm. The Autumn Olive, introduced into the county by the conservation district, are now providing fruit for songbirds.

Farmers look at Chevron Chemical Company's **"zip seeder"** during district farm tour. The "zip seeder" reseeds pasturiland without seedbed preparation. Competing grass is controlled with herbicides. More than 100 acres have been seeded in the district with this machine.

Dan Carson, Appomattox, tries his luck on one of their three farm ponds. There are over 1,200 ponds in the district.

Photo- L. G. Kesteloo, Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries.

Mother Nature's Looking Better - Conservation District Reports

Mother Nature's soil, once badly exposed, is being covered with protective conservation measures by voluntary cooperators in the Robert E. Lee Soil and Water Conservation District. For nearly 38 years the conservation district has provided conservation assistance to help make her beautiful and fruitful again.

When the conservation district was organized in 1938, erosion and stream pollution were rampant. Local rivers were said to be "too thick to drink and too thin to plow." Reorganized in 1972, the conservation district now encompasses Amherst, Appomattox, Campbell Counties and Lynchburg. To be effective, conservation measures must be carefully planned, installed and maintained. Technical assistance for planning and applying conservation practices is provided to the conservation district by the USDA Soil Conservation Service and other conservation agencies.

Conservation work in the late 1930's was mostly installing terrace on tobacco land and stabilizing gullies. The war greatly increased the need for wheat, corn and forage crops for dairy and livestock production. Contour strip cropping, grassed waterways, pasture and hayland improvement, livestock watering facilities and drainage were the most popular practices.

The 1950's and 1960's brought about many land use changes. Cropland was coverted to grassland and open land to woodland at an unprecedented rate. Floods followed by droughts pointed to the need to better manage our water resources. Irrigation ponds were constructed at a record pace. Two water-shed projects, East Fork of Falling River and Little Falling River watershed projects, were completed. Six floodwater retarding reservoirs wereconstructed and land throughout the watersheds adequately protected with accelerated application of conservation practices.

The decade of the 1970's are presenting many challenges to the conservation efforts. Farmers are using larger machinery and using cropland more intensively. Conventional conservation systems, such as contour strip cropping and crop rotations, are being abandoned by many to increase grain acreages. Land without the benefit of adequate conservation measures erodes 5 to 10 times more than the land can sustain and not deteriorate. Mulch planting, stubble planting chisel plowing and other no tillage or minimum tillage practices are being adopted rapidly. The conservation district will continue to promote these systems along with other practices that will keep soil losses within tolerable limits.

Urban development now contributes a large portion of the total silt which pollutes our streams. Too often these developments loose large quantities of soil before conservation assistance is requested. Local erosion and sediment control ordinances will require planned conservation measures to be applied during constructin for all applicable developments. The Robert E. Lee District will assist developers and others in getting adequate sediment control plans prepared.

The following summarized the conservation practices applied in the district during the past fiscal year and the sumulative effect of the concerted conservation movement:

Currently there are 986 voluntary cooperators who apply and maintain soil and water conservation practices on 224,930 acres in Amherst, Appomattox, Campbell Counties and Lynchburg. Most of these cooperators have a conservation plan developed by the District Conservationist and the cooperator. Twenty-nine new plans covering 6,389 acres were developed during the year. In addition, 59 inventories and evaluations of conservation problems and recommended solutions were prepared for noncooperators within the district. Landowners who need complex planning, application, and maintenance assistance, such as farmers, are encouraged to become district cooperators. Those with conservation problems that can be solved with simple planning or application assistance and no subsequent follow-up are not usually encouraged to become district cooperators.

During the year, 383 landowners or operators were provided with 1,319 services to plan or apply conservation practices. More than 18,000 acres of crops were produced using minimum tillage while 8 acres of contour strip cropping were established. It is estimated that more than 15,000 acres of contour strip cropping is established in the district. Eight acres of grassed waterways were installed during the year. Drainageways lined with protective grasses are estimated to be 1,100 acres. The 131 acres of critically eroding land vegetated in rural and urban areas makes nearly 4,000 acres stabilized. More than 2 miles of diversion terraces were constructed during the year to protect these plantings. About 2 miles of open drains were constructed last year making 44 miles of open drains in the district. Underground drainage (tile or plastic tubing) is more permanent than open drains. Two miles of underground drains were installed in addition to the existing 35 miles.

Grass is the most important crop in the district. An additional 1,297 acres was seeded last year with technical assistance. Eleven livestock watering facilities were installed making a total of 147 springs developed and 165 troughs constructed. The number of planned year-around grazing systems continues to increase. Animal waste disposal systems are among the newest practices. Four systems were installed last year.

Twenty one farm ponds were constructed making a total of 1,223 ponds built according to SCS standards. There were 38 acres of wildlife habitat developed with district assistance in FY'75. Perennial wildlife plantings, such as bicolor lespedeza and autumn olive, are encouraged.

Our native pine forests reproduce naturally in abandoned fields. Since few fields are abandoned now, pine seedlings must be planted. There are tens of thousands of acres of poor quality hardwood brush that should be converted to pine. The conservation district assists landowners in making land use decisions on their woodland. Detailed woodland planning and application assistance is provided by the Virginia Division of Forestry.

Engineering assistance is provided to local governments to develop public recreation areas. Nine acres of playgrounds and athletic fields were developed during the year.

Soils information was provided to many landowners and several local governments. Soils on several sites were investigated to locate public facilities.

The Buffalo River Watershed project has been approved by Congress and authorized for construction. Soils, geology and engineering data have been collected and structures are being designed. The county is purchasing the 4 reservoir sites which will be used for public recreation and flood control. Two of the 4 lakes will provide municipal water.

Although the Upper Appomattox River watershed project is several years behind Amerst's Buffalo River project, aerial survey work is completed and some field survey work is underway. The Upper Appomatox project is co-sponsored by the Robert E. Lee, Piedmont and Peter Francisco Soil and Water Conservation Districts and six local governments.

Flood analysis studies sponsored by Amherst County and Robert E. Lee Conservation District are completed on Buffalo, Pedlar and Piney Rivers.

The districts Educational Program includes a Youth Program, observance of Soil Stewardship Week and a farm tour. One-hundred ten people saw planned conservation programs applied during the farm tour sponsored by the Robert E. Lee District and Fidelity National Bank.

Although much conservation has been accomplished, we still have a big job to do. Population in the next 50 years in expected to duble in America. Without a concerted effort our soil and water resources and quality of life will deteriorate. If we take care of Mother Nature, she will take care of us.

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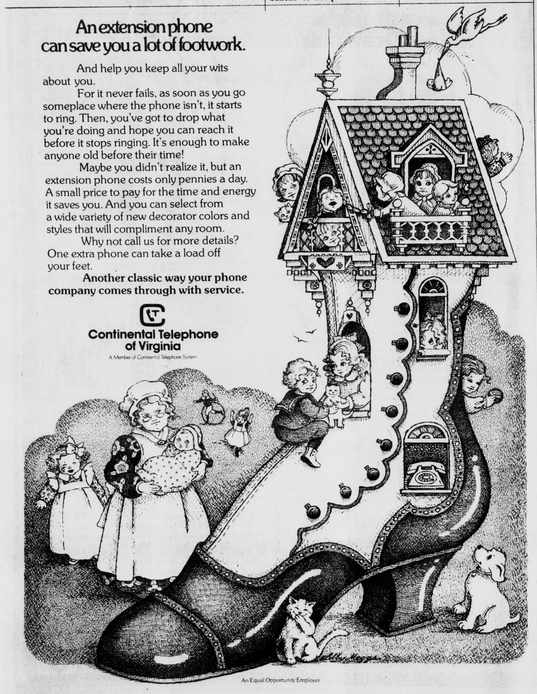

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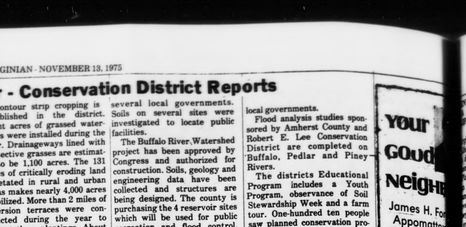

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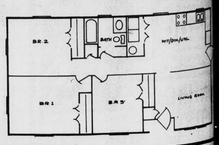

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Cub Scout Pack 546 News

The monthly pack meeting was held Thursday night at the Appomattox Elementary School auditorium. Walt Williams, Cubmaster, presided over the meeting.

The pack meeting is a gathering of all the dens of the pack to have fun together as a family unit and to recognize the individual cub scouts for their achievements.

There are presently 4 active dens in pack 546. The den mothers are Barbara Mayberry Betty Mayberry, Carolyn Fields, Mildred Thompson, Betsy Carter, Billie Carter, Betty Stienkamp, Gayle Williams and Nell Drinkard.

Awards were presented to the following cub scouts: Jay Chenault, Bobby Hart, F. C. Carter, Scott Drinkard, J. C. Rogers, Tracy Goin, Jack Williams, Bobby Carter, and Jay Wingfield.

Mrs. Barbara Mayberry gave a report on the annual pow-wow which was held in Roanoke last Saturday Oct. 25th. Pack 546 received an award for having the best attendance at the Pow-wow.

Plans were made for having the cub scouts march in the homecoming parade and also for a Father and Son cake bake and auction.

The next pack meeting will be held sometime the last part of November. The time and place will be published after plans are finalized.

APPOMATTOX COUNTY YOUNG HOMEMAKERS

The Appomattox County Young Homemakers will meet Nov. 13th at 8:00 p.m. in the home of Mrs. Cindy Ranson. Mrs. Jane Smith will present a program on making Christmas decorations and gifts.

WRECK ISLAND CLUB WILL MEET NOV. 19

The Wreck Island Extension Homemakers Club will meet on Wednesday, Nov. 19 at 1:30 p.m. at the home of Mrs. Rose Burnett.

Family Life Department will be in charge of the program and a demonstration "Gifts From the Kitchen" will be presented.

All members are urged to attend and new members are welcome.

VOTERS OF STONEWALL DISTRICT

I deeply appreciate your support and confidence in the recent election. Your advice and recommendations will be welcomed as to the business and operation of our county. My desire is to serve all of my constituents. Thank you for your support.

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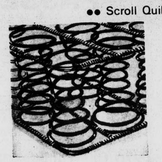

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